

November 2017

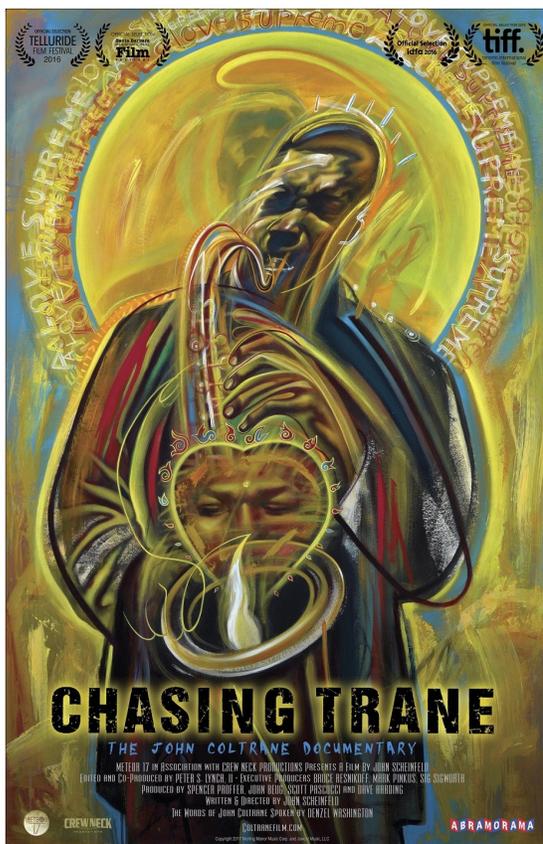
Chasing Trane: The John Coltrane Documentary Film Screening and Discussion

The National Archives at Kansas City, in collaboration with the American Jazz Museum and the Greater Kansas City Black History Study Group, will offer a free film series (monthly) continuing through May 2018. All film programs are **free** to attend.

On **Friday, November 3 at 6:00 p.m.**, the National Archives in partnership with the Greater Kansas City Black History Study Group, Kansas City PBS, and the American Jazz Museum, will host a film screening and discussion of **Chasing Trane: The John Coltrane Documentary**. This film will be screened at the Gem Theater, 1615 East 18th Street, Kansas City, MO.

Set against the social, political and cultural landscape of the times, *Chasing Trane* brings saxophone great John Coltrane to life, as a man and an artist. The film is the definitive look at the boundary-shattering musician whose influence continues to this day and includes commentary from Denzel Washington, Carlos Santana, Common, Cornel West, Bill Clinton and others. *Chasing Trane* is part of KCPT's Indie Lens Pop-Up film series made available through the PBS documentary program Independent Lens.

This program is part of a film series presented in collaboration with the American Jazz Museum, Greater KC Black History Study Group and Kansas City PBS. Reservations are requested for this **free program**, [RSVP](#).



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Upcoming Events

Unless noted, all events are held at the National Archives
400 W. Pershing Road
Kansas City, MO 64108

- **Nov. 3** - 6:00 P.M.
FILM SCREENING:
*CHASING TRANE**
- **Nov. 7** - ALL DAY
ELECTION DAY:
POLLING SITE
- **Nov 10** - FACILITY
CLOSED
- **Nov. 22** - FACILITY
CLOSED EARLY
- **Nov. 23** - FACILITY
CLOSED
- **Nov. 30** - 6:00 P.M.
EVENING LECTURE: *OH,
SAY CAN YOU SEE
WITH DAVID LUBIN**

*DENOTES EVENT IS
OFFSITE.

National Archives at Kansas City Facility Reminders



On Tuesday, November 7, the National Archives will be a polling site for Election Day. Heavier than usual foot traffic and limited parking are expected. Polling hours are 6:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

On Friday, November 10, the National Archives will be closed in observance of Veterans Day.

On Wednesday, November 22, the National Archives will close at Noon in advance of the Thanksgiving holiday. In addition, the National Archives will be closed for Thanksgiving on Thursday, November 23. We will resume regular business hours on Friday, November 24.

Oh, Say Can You See: American Art, Propaganda, and the First World War with David M. Lubin

On **Thursday, November 30 at 6:30 p.m.** the National Archives will offer in partnership with the National World War I Museum and Memorial and the Kansas City Art Institute an evening lecture with **David M. Lubin** who will discuss **Oh, Say Can You See: American Art, Propaganda, and the First World War**. A cash bar and small plates will be available for purchase at 6:00 p.m. This lecture will be held in the J.C. Nichols Auditorium at the National World War I Museum and Memorial, 2 Memorial Drive, Kansas City, MO 64108.

American artists played an active and sometimes controversial role in helping their countrymen decide whether or not to intervene in the Great War. Lubin, author of *Grand Illusions: American Art and the First World War*, will explore how patriotism and gender played integral roles in American visual culture as the war “over there” pulled America into its vortex. This program is offered in conjunction with the exhibit *Posters as Munitions, 1917*. Reservations are requested for this **free program**, [RSVP](#). Below are several examples of World War I propaganda posters from the holdings of the National Archives.



Above left: Eat more...eat less...to save for the army and our allies. National Archives at College Park, Record Group 4, Records of the U.S. Food Administration, Educational Division, Advertising Section 1918-1919. National Archives Identifier 512500.

Above: Back our girls over there. Y.W.C.A. United War Work Campaign. National Archives at College Park, Record Group 4, Records of the U.S. Food Administration, Educational Division, Advertising Section 1918-1919. National Archives Identifier 512516.

Left: Buy U.S. Government Bonds, Third Liberty Loan. National Archives at College Park, Record Group 4, Records of the U.S. Food Administration, Educational Division, Advertising Section 1918-1919. National Archives Identifier 512675.

Hidden Treasures from the Stacks

For Love of Religion or Country

Editorial note: In 2017, the United States will commemorate the 100th anniversary of its involvement in World War I, known as the Great War. Throughout 2017, in each issue of this monthly newsletter, the National Archives at Kansas City will highlight materials from our holdings that illustrate various aspects of the war - either on the home front or abroad.

In World War I, a provision in the Selective Service Act allowed for conscientious objectors, but it was broad in its definition. Men from “any well recognized religious sect” could be given non-combat positions in the military. Each draft board interpreted this rule differently.

The Mennonite Church, one religious sect that objected to acts of war, came into conflict with the U. S. Federal Government during this time. Although members of the Mennonite Church were not the only ones affected by this broad definition and interpretation, many became conscientious objectors or fled to Canada where they thought their beliefs of nonviolence would be protected. Their plight is well documented in the holdings of the National Archives at Kansas City in records found in Record Group 118, Records of the U.S. Attorneys and Marshals “Reports of Special Agents and Correspondence Relating to Enemy Alien and Espionage Act Violations.” Here are four examples:

Cornelius P. Heide, a Mennonite, was married with six sons and six daughters, and his family drew the interest of Federal investigators. They discovered after a visit to his Mountain Lake, Minnesota, farmstead that Heide’s three oldest sons – Cornelius, age 20, Peter, 19, and Henry 18 – had moved to Saskatoon, Saskatchewan Province, Canada. The inspector reported that the sons were setting up buildings on a new farmstead before the rest of the family relocated to Canada. Heide informed the inspectors that he had sold his farm and that his sons were not trying to evade military service.

Jacob H. Warkentin of Minnesota also had three sons eligible for the draft. Two sons were approved as conscientious objectors, one as a “Class 4” (above age 27 and having religious objections), and the other sent to an Iowa farm to work. Warkentin’s third son was working in Canada, but the family believed that he had registered for the draft and would report for service if called. The father stated that he believed that his sons were prepared to obey the law as far as the Bible would permit.

The Spanish Influenza, which killed more than half a million people in the U.S. alone during World War I, was also a factor during these investigations. While looking into the Mennonite family of **Abraham J. Klassen**, the inspectors arrived at the house to discover that he and his family were suffering from this pandemic. Due to the fact that they were infected with this illness, it was determined that Klassen would not be interviewed. It is unknown if the inspectors ever returned.

A letter found in Record Group 118 by **Rev. Fred J. Gingerich**, the acting Pastor of the West View Mennonite Church, responds to an allegation made in an affidavit. A witness recounted seeing Reverend Gingerich take two drafted boys, make them stand in front of the congregation, and stating that they should not wear the uniform of the United States Army and carry a gun. Gingerich told the congregation that the two draftees should not do anything that was contrary to the Church and its teachings. The investigators wanted as much evidence as they could get against him before, they believed, he went to Canada to evade prosecution.

These records illustrate how many men during World War I had to make a very personal decision between the love of their religion and the love of their country. For more information about these and other records from RG 118, Records of the U.S. Attorney, please visit the [National Archives Catalog](#).

REPORT MADE BY: R. E. Davis	PLACE WHERE MADE: Minneapolis.	DATE WHEN MADE: Nov. 2, 1918.	PERIOD FOR WHICH MADE: Oct. 20, 1918.
TITLE OF CASE AND OFFENSE CHARGED OR NATURE OF MATTER UNDER INVESTIGATION: In Re: MENNONITE FAMILIES EVADING THE DRAFT.			
STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS, EVIDENCE COLLECTED, NAMES AND ADDRESSES OF PERSONS INTERVIEWED, PLACES VISITED, ETC.:			
<p>At Windom:</p> <p>Under date of October 20th, U. S. Attorney for this District, enclosed to Agent in Charge, T. E. Campbell, for investigation, a complaint received from O. J. Finstad, county Attorney, Windom, in reference to the above matter, Mr. Finstad's letter giving names of the families who are alleged to have gone to Canada with their sons in order that the latter might evade the registration of September 13th.</p> <p>These Mennonites live at Mountain Lake, and after a preliminary investigation here, Agent proceeded to Mountain Lake, after arranging for the heads of the families mentioned, to meet Agent in town.</p> <p><u>Cornelius P. Heide</u>: It was alleged that this man sent two sons to Canada to avoid registering on September 13th.</p> <p>Interviewed at Mountain Lake, <u>Mr. Heide</u> stated on affirmation that he is 47 years old; a farmer, who has been living 2½ miles West of Mountain Lake. His family consists of, besides his wife, the following: <u>Cornelius</u>, Age 20 years; <u>Peter</u>, C. Age 19; <u>Henry</u>, age 18; <u>John</u> age 15; <u>David</u> age 11; <u>Albert</u> age 8, and five daughters.</p> <p>He further stated that <u>Cornelius</u>, <u>Peter</u> and <u>Henry</u> are now in Hepburn, Sask. <u>Henry</u> was 18 on January 26, 1918, and he, with <u>Peter</u>, went to Hepburn in August, 1918, <u>Cornelius</u> having gone over there in February, 1918. The father has bought</p>			
COPY OF THIS REPORT FURNISHED TO: <i>W.S. Attorney</i>			
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Jacob H. Warkentin, 49, besides five daughters, he has the following sons:

John H. 27 years. Henry J. 20 years,
Jacob A. 25 " Dietrich 17 "
(3) Younger boys.

He stated that John and Jacob registered here for the draft, but that John is in the 4th Class, and Jacob was drafted, went to Camp Grant, and is now working on a farm at Odebolt, Iowa, having been sent there from Camp, as a Conscientious Objector.

He further stated that Henry J. is in Dalmeny, Sask., where he went the 1st of September, and where he is now working for his Uncle, Henry Warkentin. He does not know whether the boy registered after arriving in Canada, altho: he stated before he left that he would do so. He believes that the boy would receive exemption from military service on account of his religious belief. Asked if he thought the boy would refuse to go to Camp if called, he stated that he would obey the law so far as the Bible would permit him.

Above: Letter to U.S. Attorney's Office regarding Jacob H. Warkentin. National Archives at Kansas City, Record Group 118, Department of Justice, Office of the U.S. Attorney for the Judicial District of Minnesota, Reports of Special Agents; 1917-1918. National Archives Identifier 44169008.

Graff Clothing Co.
GENTS FURNISHERS.
SEWARD, NEBR.

Aug., 7th., 1918

Mr. Thos. Allen,
Lincoln Neb.,
Dear Sir:

As per our telephone conversation yesterday I am forwarding an affidavit relative to sermon preached by Rev. Gingerich. We expect to forward other affidavits but could not secure them today and, as Rev. Gingerich is contemplating leaving the country soon, we thought best to send what evidence we have that you might take immediate action.

Yours Respectfully,

*H. A. Graff
Vice Chairman
Seward Co. Co., Neb.*

Above: Letter pertaining to U.S. v. Fred Gingerich (Reverend). National Archives at Kansas City, Record Group 118, Department of Justice Office of the Judiciary District of Nebraska, Correspondence Related to the Enemy Alien and Espionage Act Violations; 1917- 1918. National Archives Identifier 44167538.



NATIONAL
ARCHIVES

KANSAS CITY

GENERAL INFORMATION: The National Archives is open Monday through Friday 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Closed on weekends and Federal holidays. Hours are subject to change due to special programs and weather. The National Archives is located at 400 West Pershing Road, Kansas City, Missouri, 64108.

The National Archives at Kansas City is home to historical records dating from the 1820s to the 1990s created or received by Federal agencies in Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, and South Dakota. For more information, call 816-268-8000, email kansascity.educate@nara.gov or visit www.archives.gov/kansas-city. Find us on Facebook www.facebook.com/nationalarchiveskansascity. Tweet us @KCArchives or #KCArchives. Find and follow us on Instagram at: [kansascity.archives](https://www.instagram.com/kansascity.archives).